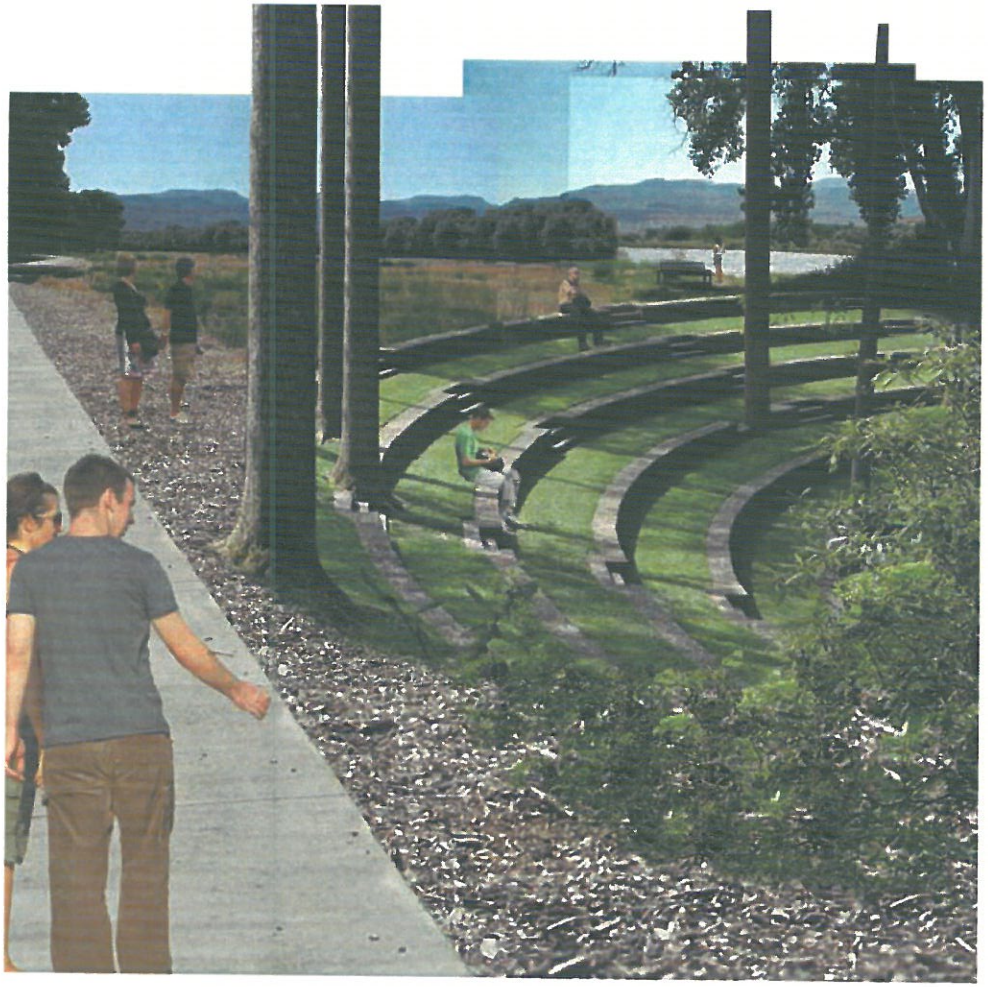
RIVERBEND PARK

Palisade, Colorado

June, 2010



outdoor classroom

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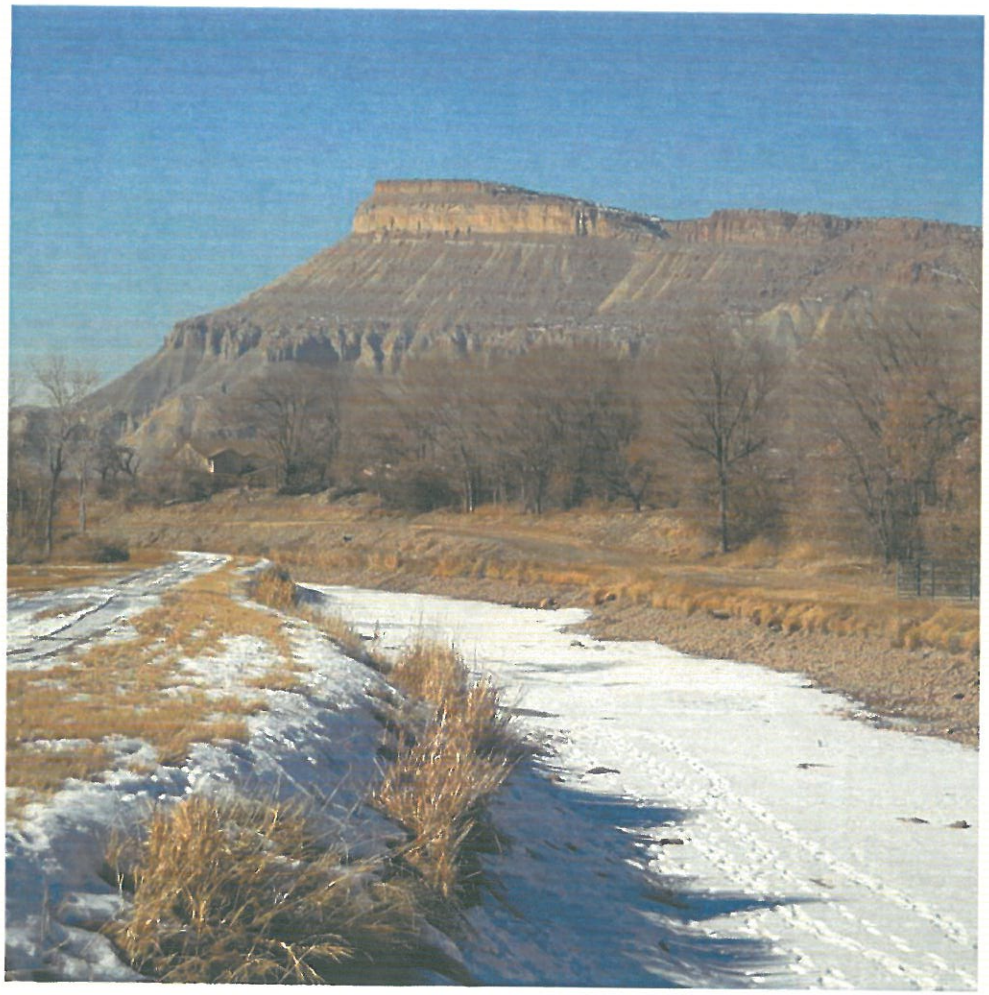
Executive Summary

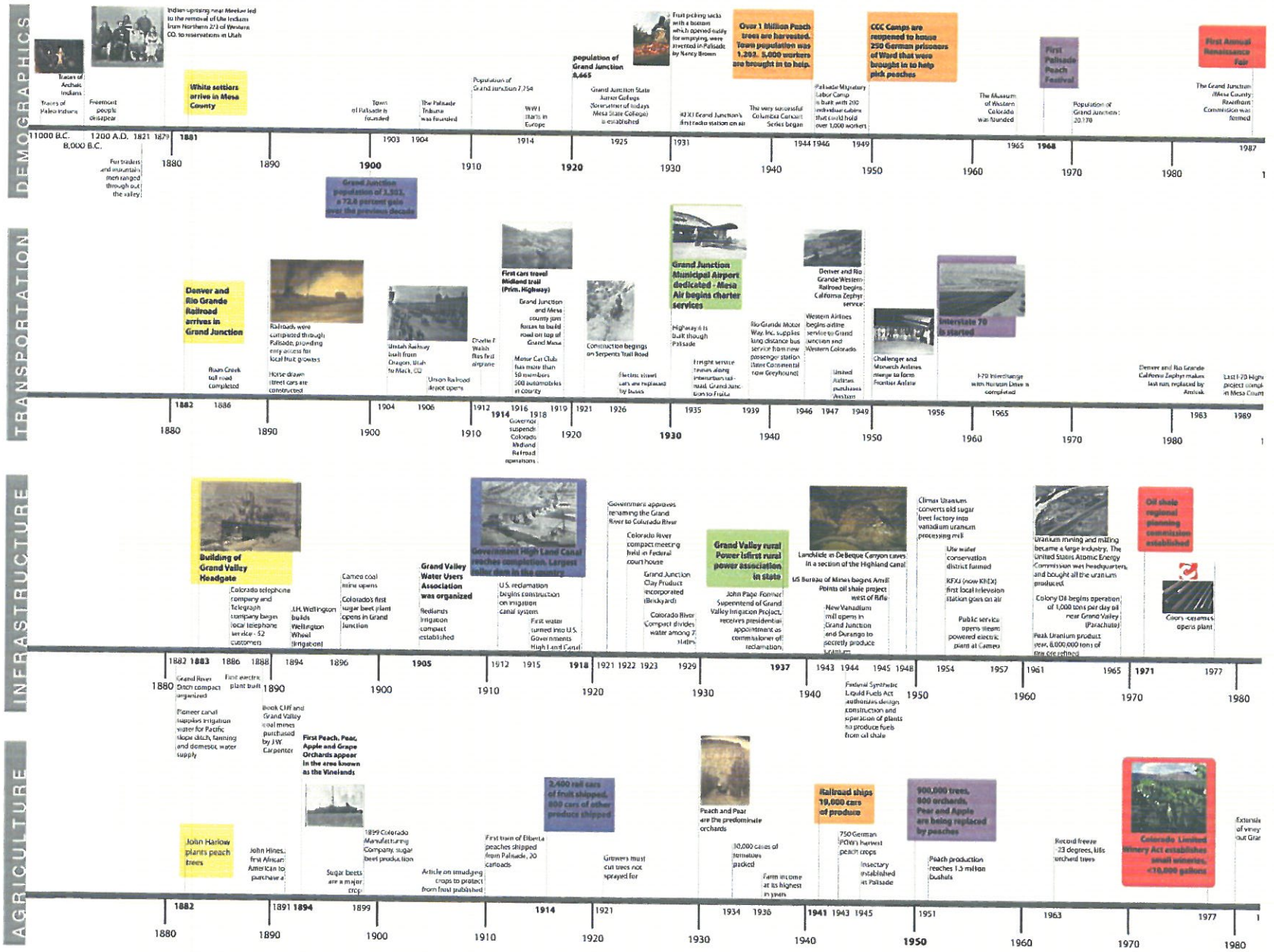
This document is a snapshot in the ongoing evolution of Riverbend Park in Palisade, Colorado. It summarizes the ideas generated through the public process and the resulting recommendations made to date in the design of park. Its purpose is to record a shared vision that guides future decisions in the development of Riverbend Park.

The document begins with an overview of the site history, design process and master plan developed with the community in the spring 2009 but focuses on the follow-up design work accomplished with the community during the spring 2010. The 2009 site assessment and master planning process was led by Richard Sales, Associate Director of the Colorado Center for Community Development (CCCD) with assistance from Holly White. The Master Plan that resulted from this process served as the foundation for further design refinement by the University of Colorado Denver (UCD) Masters of Landscape Architecture students during the spring 2010.

During both the master plan and design refinement phases, public meetings were held to collect feedback from the community. Comments resulting from conversations with residents and officials of Palisade have been integrated into the master plan vision, goals and guiding principles meant to direct future decisions regarding the park's evolution. During the most recent design phase UCD students worked with Palisade's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to develop recommendations and more detailed design ideas. These more detailed designs are illustrated in the section titled "What Could Be". In this section, the park is divided into four areas and each area is illustrated to help the reader better visualize the possible future for Riverbend Park.



view of Mt. Garfield from Riverbend Park


DEMOGRAPHICS
Traces of Archaic Indians
Traces of Paleo Indians
Freemont people disappear
Indian uprising near Meeker led to the removal of Ute Indians from Northern 2/3 of Western CO. to reservations in Utah
White settlers arrive in Mesa County
Fur traders and mountain men ranged through out the valley
Grand Junction population of 3,503, a 72.8 percent gain over the previous decade
Town of Palisade is founded
The Palisade Tribune was founded
Population of Grand Junction 7,754
WWI starts in Europe
population of Grand Junction 8,665
Grand Junction State Junior College (Forerunner of Mesa State College) is established
Fruit picking sacks with a bottom which opened easily for emptying, were invented in Palisade by Nancy Brown
Over 1 Million Peach trees are harvested. Town population was 1,293. 3,000 workers are brought in to help.
KJCI Grand Junction's first radio station on air
The very successful Columbia Concert Series began
Palisade Migratory Labor Camp is built with 250 individual cabins that could hold over 1,000 workers
CCC Camps are reopened to house 250 German prisoners of Ward that were brought in to help pick peaches
The Museum of Western Colorado was founded
First Palisade Peach Festival
Population of Grand Junction: 20,170
First Annual Renaissance Fair
The Grand Junction (Mesa County) Riverfront Commission was formed
11000 B.C.
8,000 B.C.
1200 A.D.
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TRANSPORTATION
Denver and Rio Grande Railroad arrives in Grand Junction
Ruam Creek toll road completed
Horse drawn street cars are constructed
Railroads were completed through Palisade, providing easy access for local fruit growers
Uintah Railway built from Dragon, Utah to Mack, CO
Union Railroad depot opens
Charlie F Welsh flies first airplane
First cars travel Midland trail (Prim. Highway)
Grand Junction and Mesa county join forces to build road on top of Grand Mesa
Motor Car Club has more than 50 members 500 automobiles in county
Construction begings on Serpents Trail Road
Electric street cars are replaced by buses
Grand Junction Municipal Airport dedicated - Mesa Air begins charter services
Highway 6 is built though Palisade
Freight service leaves along interurban rail - road. Grand Junc. Goes to Fruita
Rio Grande Motor Way, Inc. supplies long distance bus service from new passenger station (later Commercial now Greyhound)
Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad begins California Zephyr service
Western Airlines begins airline service to Grand Junction and Western Colorado
United Airlines purchases Western
Challenger and Monarch Airlines merge to form Frontier Airline
Interstate 70 is started
I-70 Interchange with Horizon Drive is completed
Denver and Rio Grande California Zephyr makes last run, replaced by Amtrak
Last I-70 Highway project completed in Mesa County
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INFRASTRUCTURE
Building of Grand Valley Headgate
Colorado telephone company and Telegraph company began local telephone service - 52 customers
J.H. Wellington builds Wellington Wheel (irrigation)
Cameo coal mine opens
Colorado's first sugar beet plant opens in Grand Junction
Grand Valley Water Users Association was organized
Redlands Irrigation compact established
Government High Land Canal reaches completion. Largest roller dam in the country
U.S. reclamation begins construction on irrigation canal system
First water turned into U.S. Government High Land Canal
Government approves renaming the Grand River to Colorado River
Colorado River compact meeting held in Federal court house
Grand Junction Clay Product Incorporated (Brickyard)
Colorado River Compact divides water among 7 states
Grand Valley rural Power is first rural power association in state
John Page Former Superintend of Grand Valley Irrigation Project, receives presidential appointment as commissioner of reclamation
Landslide in DeBeque Canyon caves in a section of the Highland canal
US Bureau of Mines begins Anvil Points oil shale project west of Rifle
New Vanadium mill opens in Grand Junction and Durango to secretly produce uranium
Climax Uranium converts old sugar beet factory into vanadium uranium processing mill
Ute water conservation district formed
KFXJ (now KHEX) first local television station goes on air
Public service opens steam powered electric plant at Cameo
Uranium mining and milling became a large industry. The United States Atomic Energy Commission was headquarters, and bought all the uranium produced
Colony Oil begins operation of 1,000 tons per day oil near Grand Valley (Parachute)
Peak Uranium product year, 8,000,000 tons of ore (or rather)
Oil shale regional planning commission established
Colors -ceramics opens plant
Federal Synthetic Liquid Fuels Act authorizes design construction and operation of plants to produce fuels from oil shale
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AGRICULTURE
John Harlow plants peach trees
John Hines, first African American to purchase a
First Peach, Pear, Apple and Grape Orchards appear in the area known as the Vinelands
Sugar beets are a major crop
1899 Colorado Manufacturing Company sugar beet production
Article on smudging crops to protect from frost published
First train of Elberta peaches shipped from Palisade, 20 carloads
2,400 rail cars of fruit shipped, 800 cars of other produce shipped
Growers must cut trees not sprayed for
Peach and Pear are the predominate orchards
30,000 cases of tomatoes packed
Farm income at its highest in years
Railroad ships 19,000 cars of produce
750 German POW's harvest peach crops
Insectary established in Palisade
900,000 trees, 800 orchards. Pear and Apple are being replaced by peaches
Peach production reaches 1.5 million bushels
Record freeze 23 degrees, kills orchard trees
Colorado Limited Winery Act establishes small wineries, <10,000 gallons
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Riverbend Park Master Plan
Palisade, Colorado
Colorado Center for Community Development, Spring2009
Educational Wetlands Habitat
Outdoor Classroom
West Parking Lot
West Entry Plaza

former BR-59 facilities were dismantled. At the same time, the Palisade Migratory Labor Camp was built on the west end of the site to house migrant workers during the peach harvest. In 1943, the Labor Camp consisting of 200 dwellings was dedicated and filled to capacity. The Labor Camp cabins were dismantled after its closure in the 1960's but many of the foundations are still visible in the park.

Multiple wineries established in the area in the 1970's brought a new industry to Palisade. The expansion of this industry brought additional revenue and summer festivals to the area. Riverbend Park has become the location for these festivals.

Process History

This document represents a stage in development of Riverbend Park. Prior to the involvement of the landscape architecture students from the University of Colorado Denver (UCD), there was a significant amount of site assessment, public participation and thoughtful design work led by Richard Sales and Holly White, with the Colorado Center Community Development (CCCD) and the Town of Palisade. This work resulted in a Master Plan, completed in the spring of 2009, which articulated a solid direction for Riverbend Park and laid the foundation for this document.

The master planning process identified several decisions to be made by the Town of Palisade. These decisions were difficult to make without a more detailed understanding of the implications of the alternatives. To assist in the forward movement of the project, the UCD students were invited to more accurately draw the possibilities established in the Master Plan in order to better understand the implications and then to make recommendations based on those conversations.

As a part of this process, the students worked with the Palisade Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) to prepare designs which explored the pro's and con's of possible solutions. Three public meeting were held to collect feedback from the community and to guide the PRAC and student design team in refining the vision for the park. The feedback helped guide the detailed designs and the students presented revised ideas to the community on May 6, 2010.

A more extensive history of the site is documented in the paper "Riverbend Park: A Short History" written by Marlise Fratinardo of the Colorado Center for Community Development in July 2006.

cottonwood gallery

Goals

The goals and guiding principles evolved through discussions with various town agencies and residents. By accepting these goals and principles, the public process to date has given a clear design direction upon which the future design planning should be based.

- Improve the park for everyday use as well as festivals by acknowledging and expanding upon existing uses.
- Create a variety of water experiences for the users.
- Expand interpretive and educational aspects of site.
- Design a park that is sensitive to the maintenance capabilities of the town.
- Design a park that balances ecological systems with recreational uses.
- Design a park that is understood as a whole and which is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Design a park that contributes to Palisade's community identity.

Vision

A community park located in a river ecosystem.

Riverbend Park is unique because of its location and history. First and foremost, it is to remain a community park supporting daily activities such as walking, exercising, and enjoyment of the river and river habitat. The park should not only enhance its small town community and 'natural' feel but also accommodate recreational activities, festivals and concerts which attract and welcome visitors to the community. In addition, the park should provide the opportunity for residents and visitors to learn about the community's agricultural history and ecological systems along the banks of the Colorado River.

outdoor classroom

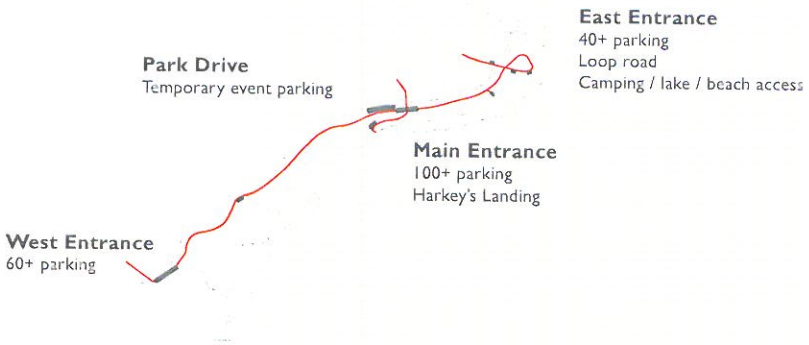
Framework

The design of a park this large requires enough structure to give form and character to the site, but must also be adaptable to accommodate changing demands and uses. The following recommendations establish this flexible framework.

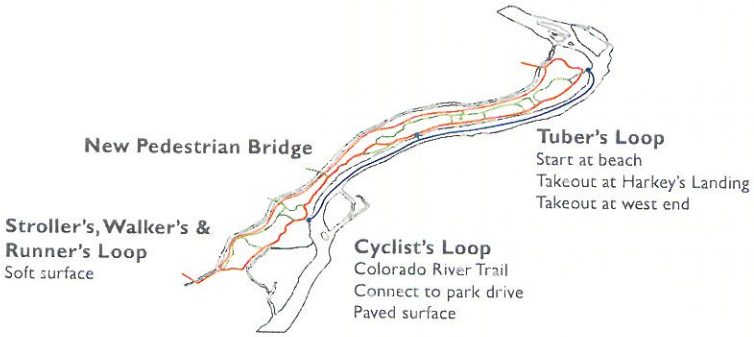
Park Access and Vehicular Circulation

- Develop three access points and a drive paralleling the GVIC service road. Eliminate non-emergency vehicular traffic along the river.
  - Install a bridge with public access at Brentwood Drive to provide access to the east end. Access at this location will likely be required during the removal of the sewage treatment lagoons and should become public after construction is complete.
- Expand and create more well-defined parking areas.
  - Improve parking lots at the main entry and boat launch by re-designing and defining edges and opening up the middle of the park so the landscape is continuous. (approximately 100 spaces and 4 boat trailers)
  - Improve off-site parking along Brentwood Drive by appropriately marking parking spaces. (approximately 25 spaces)

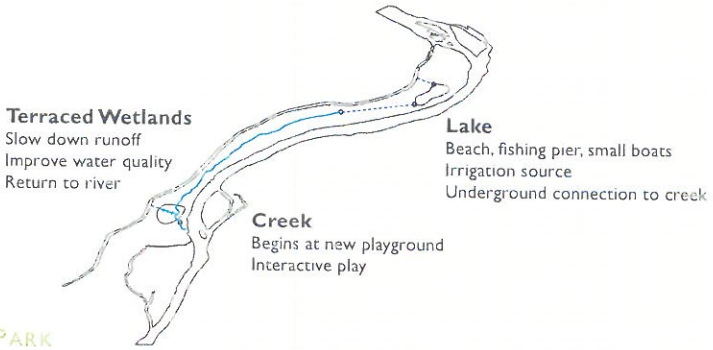
PARK ACCESS & VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



RIVER ACCESS & LOOPED TRAILS

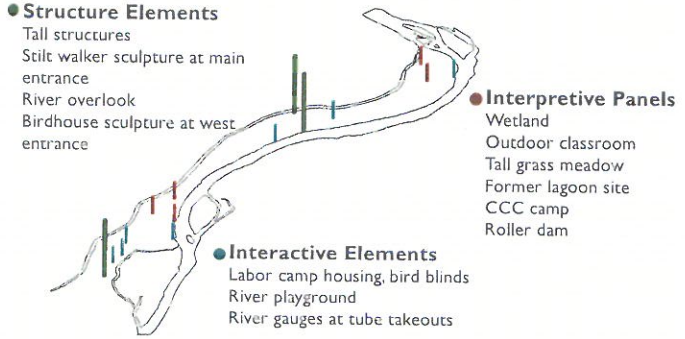


WATER SYSTEMS

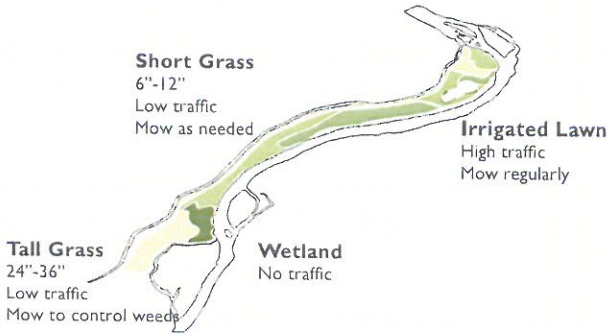


RECREATION & FESTIVALS

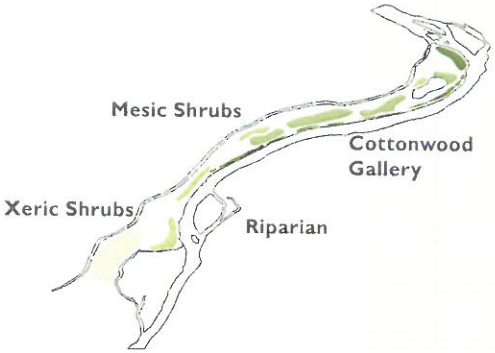
HISTORY & EDUCATION



HABITAT& VEGETATION (GRASSES)



HABITAT & VEGETATION (TRESS & SHRUBS)



- Improve the parking lot at the west end by appropriately marking parking spaces. (approximately 60 spaces)
- Create additional parking in the park at both the west and east ends.
- Temporary event parking to be west of main parking lot and north of the park drive.

• Provide ADA accessibility to each activity area in the park, such as, the lake, amphitheater, festival areas and rivers edge.

River Access and Looped Trails

• Increase river usage by developing multiple points of access along the river's edge.

• Create a tuber's loop by developing a beach at the east end, providing a more pedestrian-friendly river access at Harkey's Landing, and another tube takeout at the west end of the park.

• Create a cyclist's loop within the park by connecting the Colorado River Trail to the proposed park drive which parallels the canal service road.

• Create stroller's, walker's and runner's loops by adding additional trails creating smaller loops within the park.

• Add an additional pedestrian bridge east of the existing high school bridge.

Water Systems

• Remove sewage treatment lagoons; relocate and enlarge the lake on the east end with activities, such as a beach, fishing piers and possibly small boats.

• Restructure the creek to become an interactive play feature that functions and drains properly.

• Create a series of terraced wetlands to control the quantity and quality of runoff being returned to the river.

Recreation and Festivals

• Develop a 'town' campground to accommodate approximately 25 car-camping spaces for tents, toppers and trailers (not for RV's.) Water and electric hookups will not be provided.

• Increase festival space and develop a soundstage and amphitheater at the lake's edge.

• Rearrange disc golf course to accommodate park improvements.

History and Education

• Develop a series of interpretative panels, interactive elements and structural elements that create the opportunity to discover and learn about the community's agricultural history and ecological systems along the banks of the Colorado River.

• Relocate one to three of the migratory labor camp houses on the original pads and use them for activities such as bird viewing.

Habitat and Vegetation

• Preserve and enhance the habitat and 'wild' areas on the west end.

• Maintain and create new habitat by planting native species throughout the park.

• Manage invasive species.

Vegetation for the site is categorized into eight broad landscape types: irrigated lawn, short grass, tall grass, wetland, riparian, mesic shrubs, xeric shrubs and cottonwood gallery. Images and suggested species for each of the eight landscape types are illustrated on the following page.

Blue Grass
Poa Pratensis

Canada Blue Grass
Poa Compressa

Red Fescue
Fescuta Rub

Western Fescue
Fescuta Occidentalis

Rye Grass
Lolium Sps.

Irrigated Lawn

Short Grass

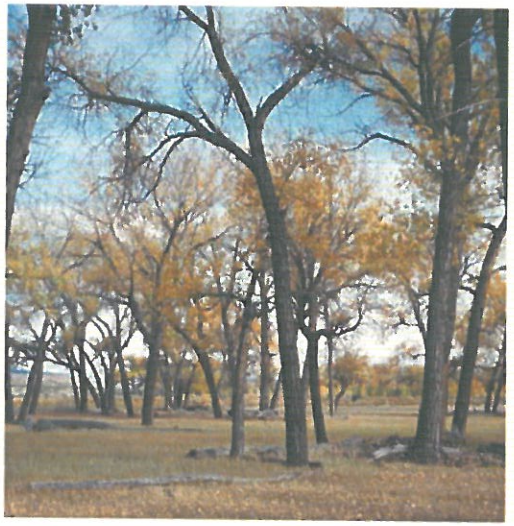
Bent Grass
Agrostis Stolonifera

Blue Grama
Bouteloua Gracilis

Buffalo Grass
Buchloe Dactyloides

Orchard Grass
Dactylis Glomerata

Love Grass
Eragrostis Hipnoides



Cottonwood Gallery

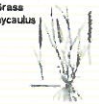
Tall Grass

Cottonwood
Populus Deltoides

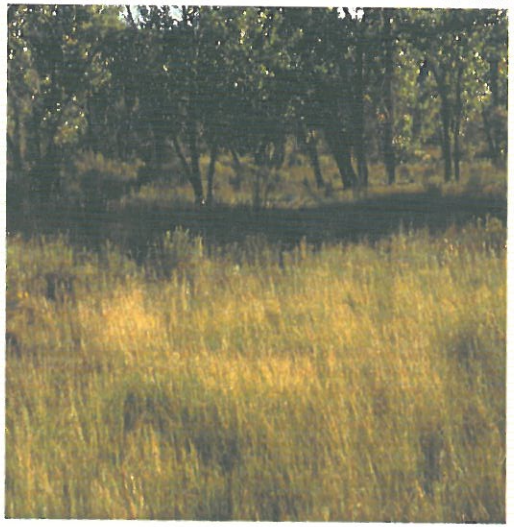
Dropseed Grass
Sporobolus Airoides

Salt Grass
Distichlis Spicata

Wild Rye Grass
Elmus Tachycaulus



June Grass
Koeleria Macrantha



Barley
Hordeum Vulgare

Foxtail Muhly
Muhlenbergia Andina

Little Bue Stem
Schizachyrium Scoparium

Switch Grass
Panicum Obtusum

Western Wheat Grass
Pascopyrum Smithii

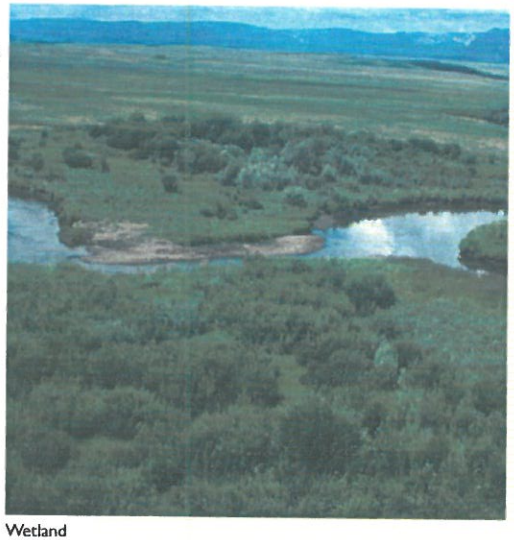
Carex
Carex Scopulorum

Juncus
Juncus Confusus

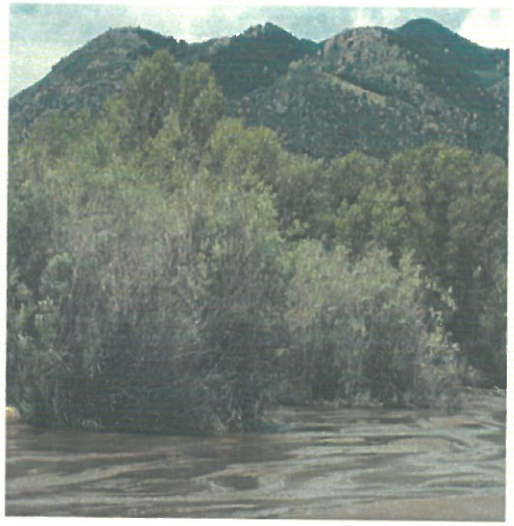
Horse Tail
Equisetum Arvense

Bluejoint Reed Grass
Calamagrostis
Canandensis

Reed Grass
Phragmites Australis



Wetland



Riparian

Box Elder
Acer Negundo

Alder
Alnus Incana

River Birch
Betula Occidentalis

Red Twig
Dogwood
Cornus Sericea

Planes Willow
Salix Planifolia

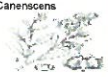
Xeric Shrubs

Buffaloberry
Shepherdia Argenta

Rabbitbrush
Chrysothamnus
Nauseosa

Sage
Artemesia Tridentata

Saltbush
Atriplex Canenscens



Sumac
Rhus Triloba

Mesic Shrubs

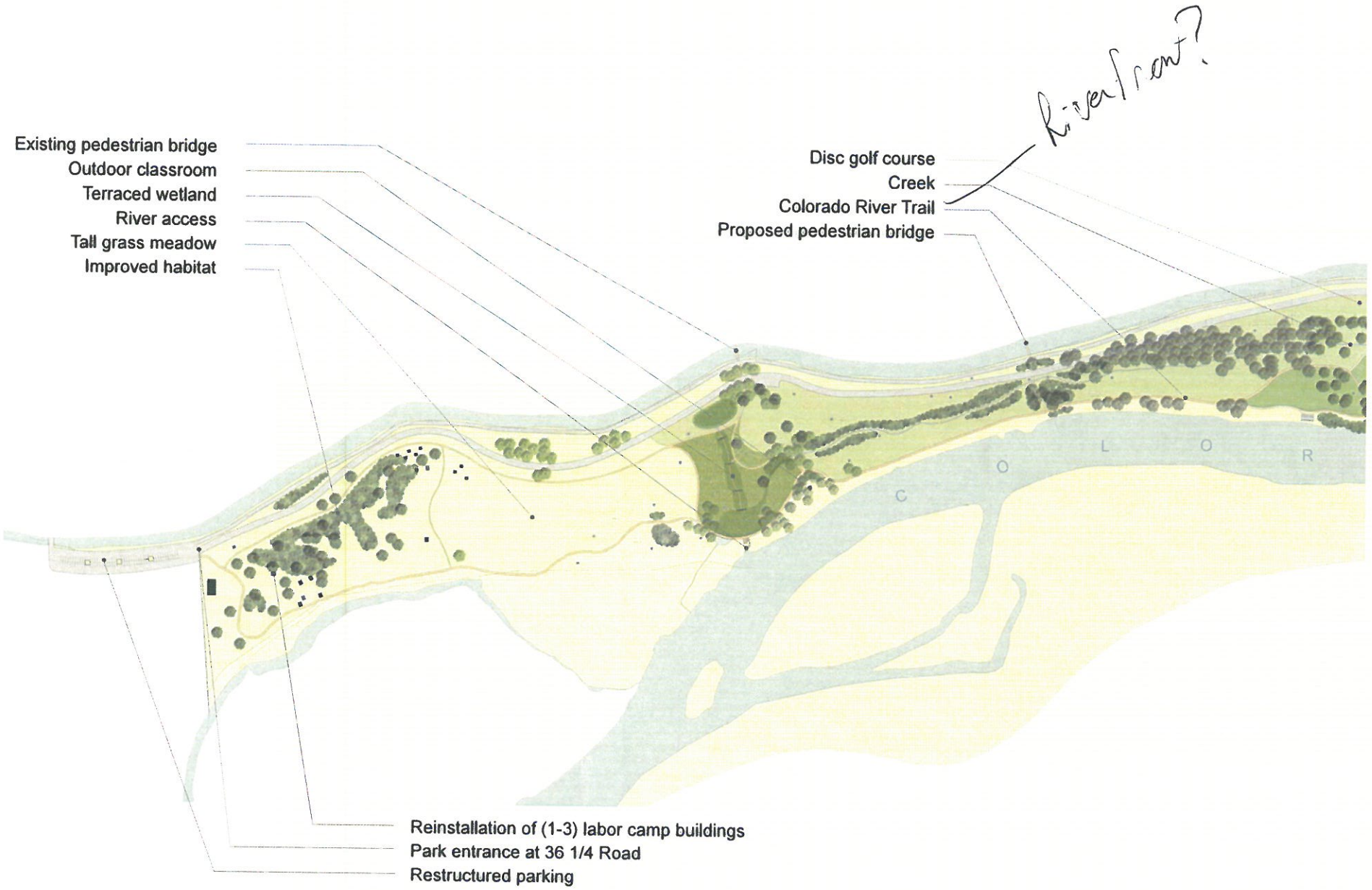
Choke Cherry
Prunus Virginiana

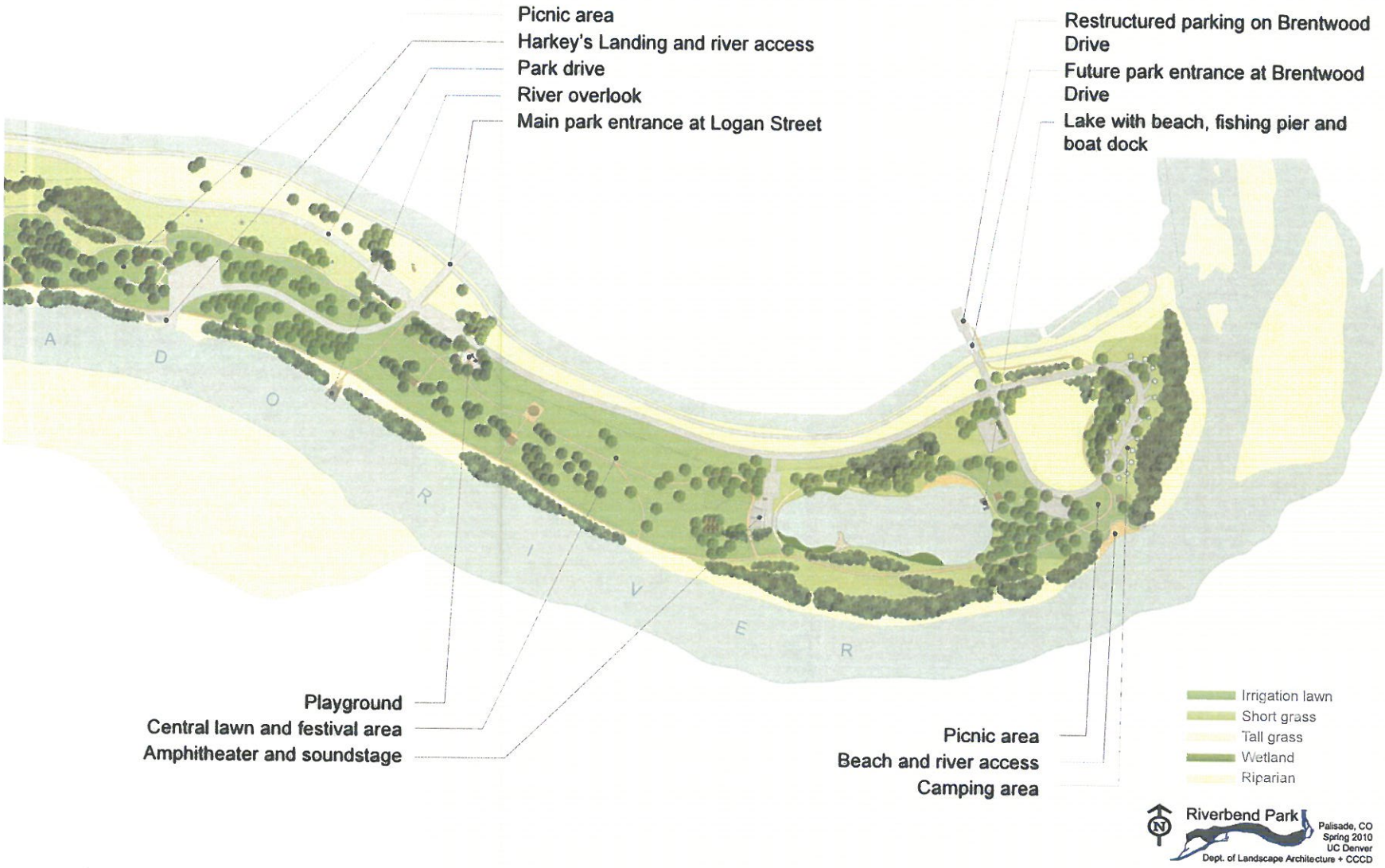
Ninebark
Physocarpus Monogynus

Rock Spirea
Holodiscus Dumosus

Sevicberry
Amelanchier
Alnifolia

Wax Currant
Ribes Cereum


Existing pedestrian bridge
Outdoor classroom
Terraced wetland
River access
Tall grass meadow
Improved habitat
Disc golf course
Creek
Colorado River Trail
Proposed pedestrian bridge
River front?
Reinstallation of (1-3) labor camp buildings
Park entrance at 36 1/4 Road
Restructured parking


Picnic area
Harkey's Landing and river access
Park drive
River overlook
Main park entrance at Logan Street
Restructured parking on Brentwood Drive
Future park entrance at Brentwood Drive
Lake with beach, fishing pier and boat dock
A D O
R I V E R
Playground
Central lawn and festival area
Amphitheater and soundstage
Picnic area
Beach and river access
Camping area
Irrigation lawn
Short grass
Tall grass
Wetland
Riparian
N
Riverbend Park
Palisade, CO
Spring 2010
UC Denver
Dept. of Landscape Architecture + CCCD

What Could Be

fishing at the lake

East End

The design for the east end proposes more active recreation such as camping, fishing, boating and sunbathing. After the removal of the sewage treatment lagoons, the lake is to be reconstructed to the east and increased to a little more than double its current size to accommodate a beach, fishing piers and possibly small boats. Piers extending into the lake from both ends of the dock offer better fishing and viewing opportunities. A sandy beach offers smaller children a safer entrance to the water and play area than the river beach.

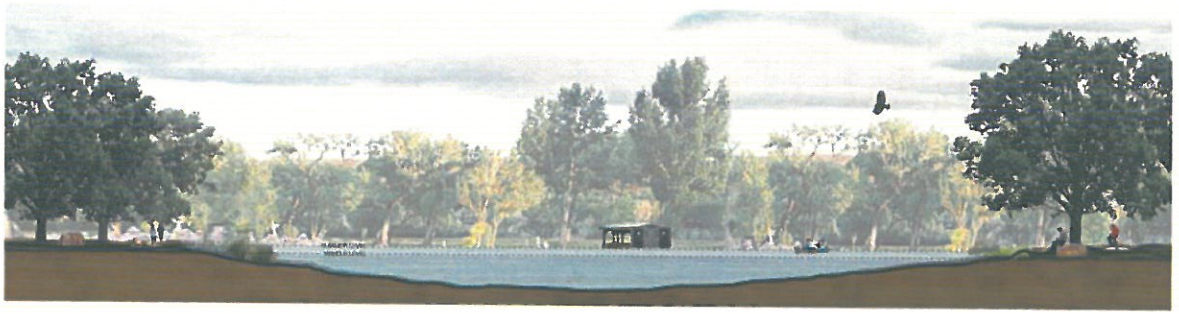
Vehicular access from Brentwood Drive also supports these activities. It is anticipated that access at this location will be required during the removal of the lagoons and it is recommended that it become public after the construction is complete. Additional parking spaces can be gained by appropriately marking the existing off-site parking area to the north along Brentwood Drive.

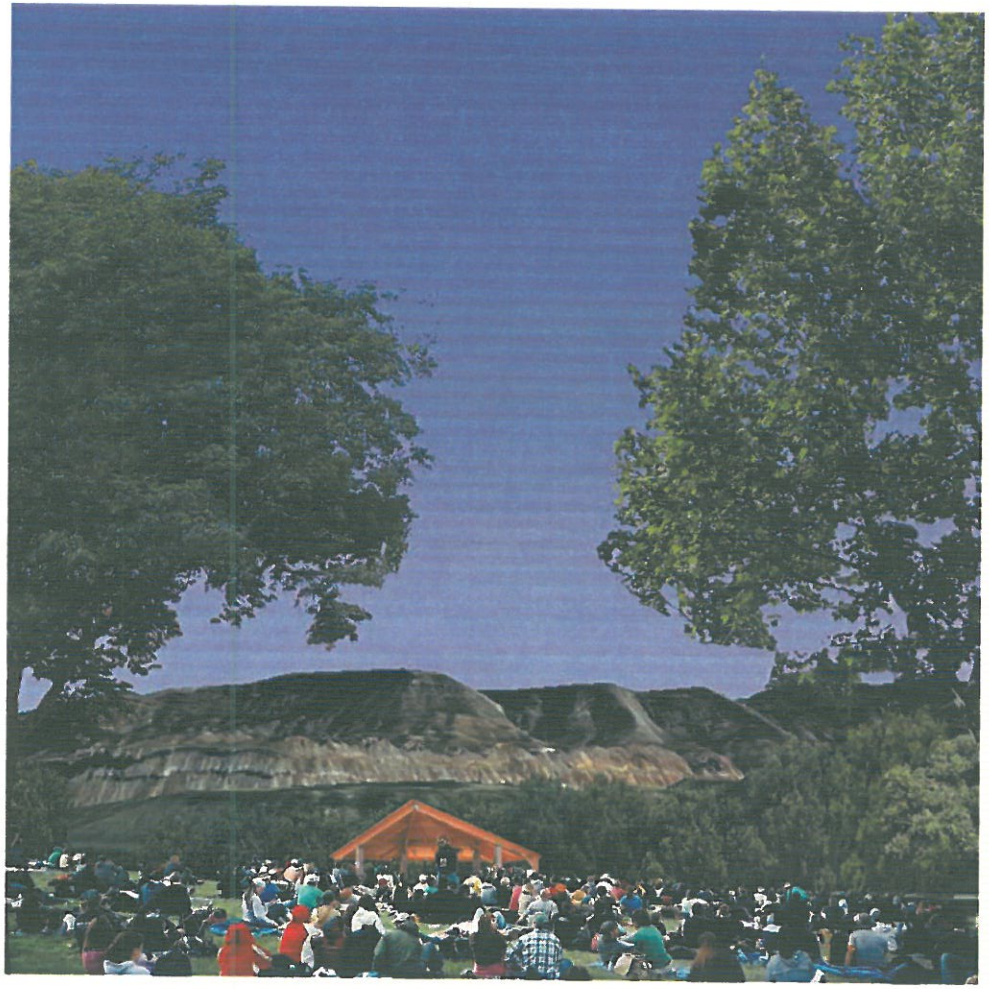
From Brentwood Drive, a loop road provides access to an additional 35 parking spaces on-site and a town campground with 25 "self dependent" car-camping spaces for tents, toppers and camp trailers with the exception of RV's, and without water and electric hook-ups. The Colorado River Trail is to be connected to the loop road and to the park drive providing a paved loop within the park for cyclists.

The area immediately south of the lake provides river access giving park goers the opportunity to sunbathe and cool off in the river. A beach and tubing inlet is included to allow users to launch from this point and float downstream to a lower portion of the site and return. There is a bluegrass lawn area to be included at this end of the site to provide frisbee, croquet, or bocce ball types of activities for the campers and other recreationalists. A centrally located multipurpose structure is proposed to accommodate uses such as bathhouse, restrooms, concessions, boat and kayak rental, camper check-in and possible future uses such as bike, tube, beach chair rentals.

section of beach

top section of camping area
middle section of lake looking east
bottom section of lake looking north





amphitheater and soundstage

Amphitheater and Festival Area

Moving the lake east increases the area used for festivals and creates the opportunity for an amphitheater and soundstage at the western shore of the lake. The amphitheater and festival area are extremely flexible for varying uses, respond to highly fluctuating levels of traffic throughout the year, and also are adaptable and responsive to changing needs over time. As the park is primarily a community park, the amphitheater and event space will be amenable to daily individual use and will be open to the public the majority of the year. It will provide a source of income for the town through private rentals (e.g. weddings), and easily accommodate large festivals and high profile events.

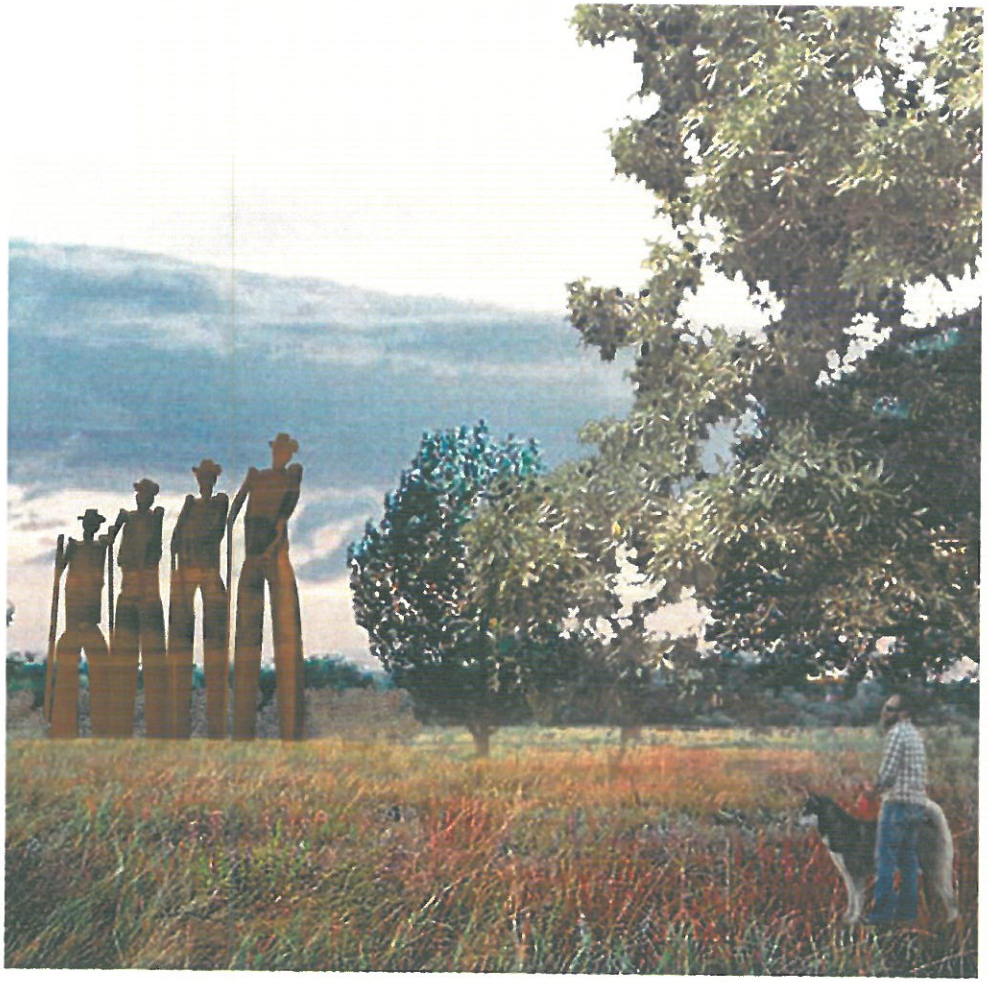
The amphitheater and surrounding space is oriented to direct noise away from residences and the general shape creates a buffer between festival activity and homes to the north. The gentle sloping form will augment flow of the landscape and blend harmoniously into the surrounding park elements. Additionally, the landforms are intended to create elevated vantage points that increase visibility of the river, the lake, the rest of the park, and the surrounding iconic geology. Subtly oriented to align with the general axis of the park, this design is complemented by continuous view sheds, which will not interrupt park circulation patterns, and will facilitate an overarching connectivity of space, sense of place, and a positive park experience.

In order to accommodate a wide variety of users and to add value to the park in general, the amphitheater design also provides convenient logistical features. An ADA-compliant parking area accommodates approximately 20 spaces and can be used to access the amphitheater as well as the lake and fishing pier. It also includes a multi-purpose service road for direct access to the stage and the concessions and ticketing building. Furthermore, the design allows for incremental development, phasing and future expansion as funding becomes available and needs evolve. Functioning as one component of a connected park system, this feature adapts to the immediate small-scale or large-scale demands of its users.

The amphitheater is comprised of three main components: the stage, fixed covered seating, and flexible lawn seating. The 2,600 square foot area with fixed covered seating is designed to accommodate 300 seats including 25 ADA-accessible and the 24,000 square foot flexible lawn seating area can accommodate an additional 1,700 people.

section of amphitheater and soundstage looking east

section of amphitheater and soundstage looking north



main entrance with stilt walker sculpture

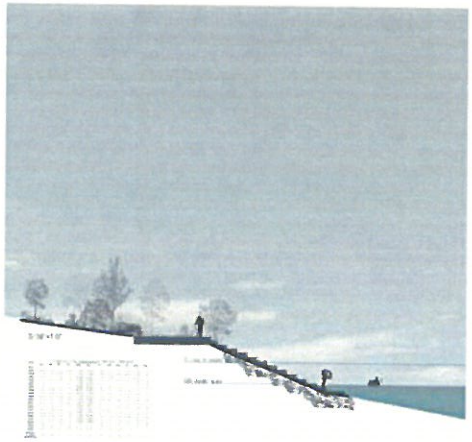
Main Entrance

Currently, loosely defined parking areas delineate the main entry sequence into the park. This design creates a more pleasing entry experience by adding an entry landscape with tall grasses and a large sculpture, relocating the parking areas and shielding them from view with native shrubs, creating a focal point at the river's edge and extending the existing cottonwood gallery through the middle of the park.

The two new parking areas at the entry, accommodate 35 parking spaces each, but link to different park activities. The western parking becomes the formalized beginning of disk golf, access to the picnic area and the start of a looped trail system. The eastern parking node provides access to the playground and the beginning of the creek. Each of the parking areas can be gated to control access to the park drive during events. Temporary event parking is proposed west of the western parking node and north of the park drive.

The main entrance continues through the cottonwood gallery with a focus on the tall mast of the river overlook. The entry sequence terminates at Harkey's Landing, which is reconfigured to accommodate parking for 4 boats and 30 cars, a tubing takeout with steps and seating, and access to the picnic area and the Colorado River Trail.

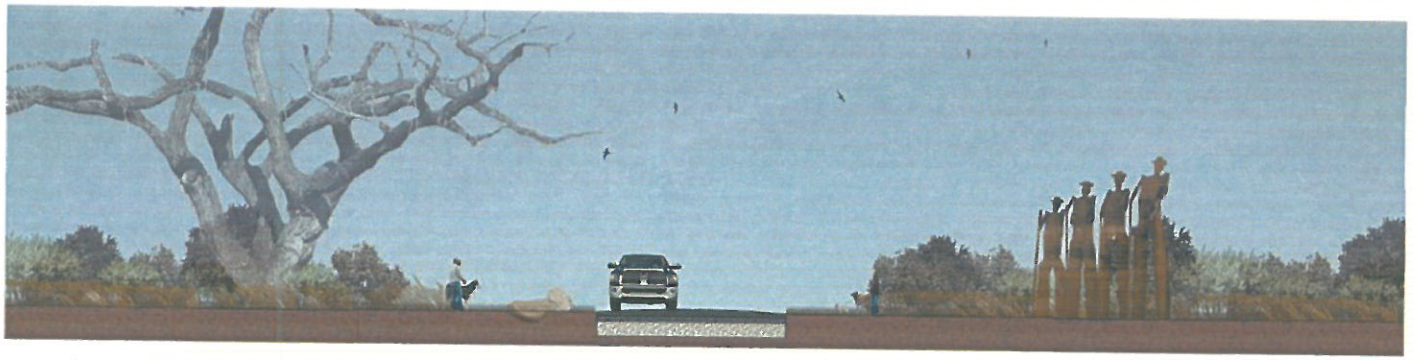
In addition to the cottonwood gallery, the creek is an important feature running through the middle of the park. Currently there is little opportunity for interaction with the water, it does not drain properly and is overgrown with invasive plants. This feature is proposed to begin at the relocated playground with areas for interaction along its length. The bottom of the creek is to be regraded to drain properly and the edges structured to allow for play and planting of native species to strengthen its role in the park ecosystem.



section of pedestrian access at Harkey's Landing

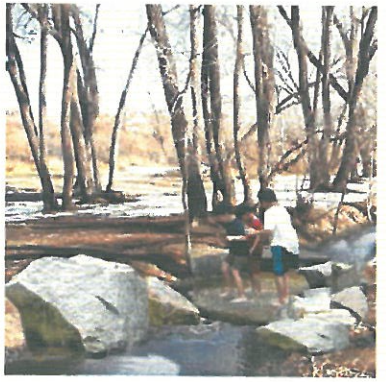
section showing vegetation at creek

section showing access to creek



section of main entrance

section of river overlook



playground and beginning of creek

creek reconstructed for play

reconstructed labor camp housing

Naturalized West End

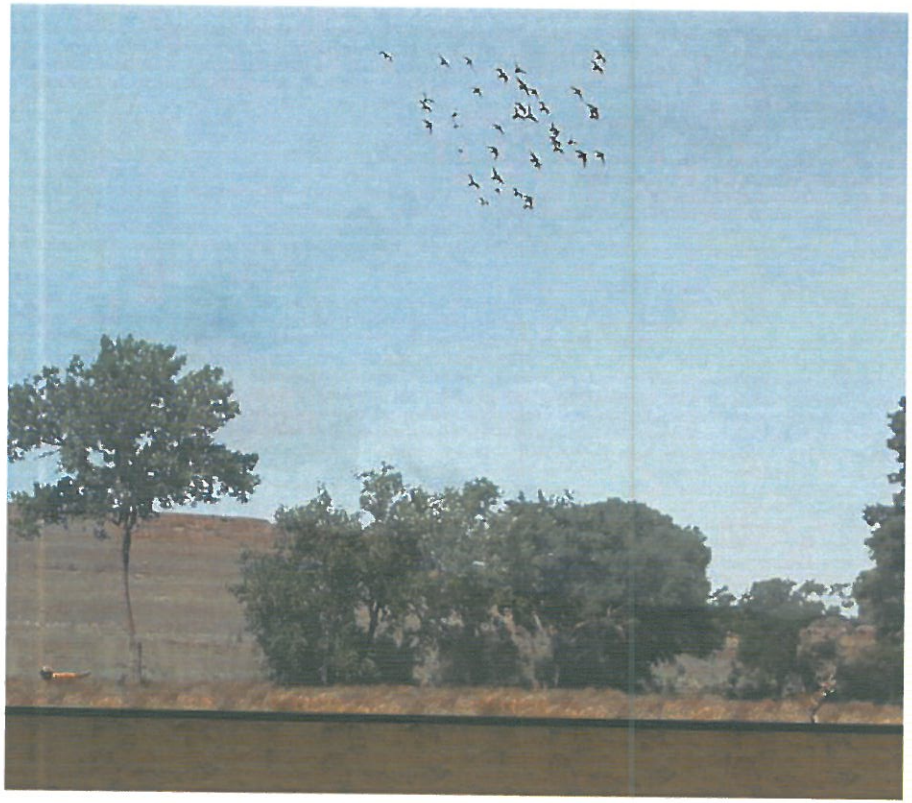
The west end currently provides a secondary entrance to the park and is the most 'natural' in its feel. The existing parking area is underutilized and if appropriately marked could accommodate up to 60 spaces. From this entrance the proposed park drive parallels the GVIC service road allowing access to more of the park and better circulation especially during events.

The community values the west end for its habitat and history; therefore this area is to remain more "natural" with passive uses. It is possible to integrate both characteristics, by focusing on educational activities. A series of steps are necessary to capture these qualities.

A deep ravine running north-south divides this area. Terraced wetlands are proposed to control water runoff, prevent scouring and improve water quality. Not only do the terraces slow and cleanse the water but they also create more diverse habitats and the potential for observing and learning about them. Located directly across from the high school bridge, boardwalks and piers allow direct interaction and investigation of small wetland and riparian zones. Pedestrian paths lead south to an outdoor classroom with terraced seating near the river. A small beach near this location provides a takeout for people tubing on the river.

It is also recommended that additional native vegetation be introduced into this end of the park. Additional native shrub species will aid in the reclamation and preserve the area for the enhancement of wildlife habitat. By restoring this area to its native state and improving habitat cover, more fauna will be attracted to the site providing enhanced ecological value and learning opportunities. It is an important goal to maintain and create new habitat throughout the park, manage invasive species and plant additional native plant species throughout the park. To integrate the history of the site with native vegetation, it is proposed to relocate and restore one to three of the migrant worker houses on the original pads and use them for activities such as screens for bird viewing.

section of terraced wetlands



section of park drive at the west end

water cleaning terrraces

reconstructed labor camp housing

view across terraces to the outdoor classroom

outdoor classroom

Conclusion

Riverbend Park is a significant park to the residents and visitors of Palisade. Over the years, the Town of Palisade has successfully integrated the park into the lives of the residents through incremental improvements and careful maintenance. Now Riverbend Park is poised for positive change. The imminent need to address the future of the sewage treatment lagoons and the community's changing needs calls for a long-term vision defining the park's future.

The vision for the park developed over the past several years and recorded in this document is bold and will require patience and persistence to execute. The potential to reinvent the role of Riverbend Park and to create a unique place that "absorbs the identity of the community as much as it reflects one" is achievable.

Acknowledgements

This document represents a stage in the development of Riverbend Park. In getting to this stage, many individuals have contributed to the creation of the vision for Riverbend Park. These include the Town of Palisade Trustees and staff, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, community members, the Colorado Center for Community Development, and the students and faculty of the University of Colorado Denver. The following list recognizes and thanks these individuals and organizations for their involvement and contributions.

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"They (large parks) absorb the identity of the city as much as they project one, becoming socially and culturally recognizable places that are unique and irreproducible."

Large Parks - Chapter 4 Re-Placing Process by Anita Berrizbeitia

A Collabrative Project

The Town of Palisade

Colorado Center for Community Development

University of Colorado Depart. of Landscape Architecture